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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [SCUL](#) [DJ](#)

SUBJECT: PD HOLDS FOCUS GROUP, TOEFL INFORMATION SESSION

1. (U) PD took advantage of the presence of Staffdel Chaka the week of March 27 to hold a focus group with about 50 local English students and teachers. Members of the Staffdel listened to the concerns and needs of the group, while sharing ideas and information about the U.S. The program was well-received by both the populace, who felt the highest levels of the U.S. government were interested in what they had to say, and the delegation, who felt they gained valuable insight into Djiboutian culture and the Department's public diplomacy effort in Djibouti. Staffdel Chaka, comprised of Malik Chaka and Dr. Pearl-Alice Marsh, expressed special interest in Post's focus on the teaching community as a bridge to getting its message to the student community.

2. (U) In addition, Post held a TOEFL information session on April 4. Post recognizes that the paper test given in Djibouti is an unfamiliar format to most locals and included in its session not only information on how to register, but also directions on how to fill out the bubble sheet and how to effectively use time on such a test. Post found that many of the questions at the session revolved around how to apply for U.S. study. As a result, Post is planning another "How to Study in the United States" information session, similar to the one held last November.

3. (U) A delegation which included the Minister of Health, Obock District Commissioner, USAID Senior Health Advisor and the USAID Health Sector Reform Project Team headed by the Chief of Party, arrived in Ala_i Dadda' and M_eho respectively for ribbon cutting ceremonies. Large crowds were on hand both days, and included most of the community and a military detachment from Obock city. The Djiboutian media covered both events.

4. (U) Post hosted Joan McKniff from Africa Regional Services, Paris, this week. Her visit included trips to the local University, the English Teacher's Association of Djibouti, private bookstores and the French Cultural Center. The trip was a productive means of promoting ARS, while also sharing ideas with local interlocutors. Post thanks ARS for its assistance.

5. (U) Post continued its visits to private night English schools to establish conversation groups. There are now three active groups with American participants. Two more are scheduled to be vetted next week.
RAGSDALE